

**REMARKS**

The Office action mailed on 6 December 2004 (Paper No. 20010726) has been carefully considered.

The specification is being amended to correct minor errors and improve form. Claim 2 is being canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and claims 1, 3, 4, 6 thru 8, 10, 13, 14, 16, 18, 19, 21 and 23 are being amended. Thus, claims 1 and 3 thru 24 are pending in the application.

In the second paragraph on page 2 of the Office action, the Examiner objected to the title of the invention as being non-descriptive. The title of the invention is being amended to read "NETWORK SYSTEM AND CONTROL METHOD FOR RECOGNIZING VARIABLE IP ADDRESS AS FIXED IP ADDRESS". It is submitted that this title of the invention is descriptive, and therefore the objection should be withdrawn.

On page 2 of the Office action, the Examiner objected to certain dependent claims (apparently, claims 6, 12 and 17) for allegedly being separated by a claim which does not also depend from the dependent claim. This objection is not understood. In that regard, it is submitted that dependent claims 6, 12 and 17 were properly sequenced.

Specifically, dependent claim 6 was dependent from claim 2, while intervening dependent claims 3 thru 5 were dependent directly or indirectly from dependent claim 2. Similarly, dependent claim 12 was dependent from dependent claim 9, while intervening dependent claims 10 and 11 were dependent directly or indirectly from dependent claim 9. Finally, dependent claim 17 was dependent from claim 14, while intervening dependent claims 15 and 16 were dependent directly or indirectly from dependent claim 14. On the latter basis, the objection to the dependent claims should be withdrawn.

In paragraph 1 on page 3 of the Office action, the Examiner rejected claims 1 thru 24 under 35 U.S.C. §102 for alleged anticipation by Anderson *et al.*, U.S. Patent No. 6,567,122. For the reasons stated below, it is submitted that the invention recited in the claims, as now amended, is distinguishable from the prior art cited by the Examiner so as to preclude rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102 or §103.

Independent claims 1, 7, 13 and 19 have been amended to recite the invention with more particularity. Specifically, each of independent claims 1, 7, 13 and 19 has been amended to recite the network system as including a dynamic host configuration protocol (DHCP) server.

As recited in independent system claim 1, the DHCP server is responsive to a request from each network unit for assigning a variable Internet protocol (IP) address to

each network unit for a predetermined period of time. As recited in independent system claim 13, the IP address is assigned to each network unit by the DHCP server. Finally, as recited in independent method claims 7 and 19, the method of the present invention includes an initial step of requesting a variable IP address for each network unit from the DHCP server when the network unit is powered up, as well as the step of transmitting the requested IP address from the DHCP server to each network unit.

The single patent cited and applied by the Examiner, Anderson *et al.* '122, does not disclose, suggest or even mention a DHCP server as a part of the system disclosed in that patent. Thus, the invention as recited in independent claims 1, 7, 13 and 19 is distinguishable from Anderson *et al.* '122 on this basis alone.

Independent system claims 1 and 13 recite an agent server which includes a communication unit for receiving unique identification information and a variable IP address for each network unit, the latter data being stored in a database or storing means. As further recited in independent claims 1 and 13, the communication unit also receives, from the user, unique identification information for a network unit selected by the user.

Anderson *et al.* '122 does not disclose a communication unit for performing the functions recited in independent claims 1 and 13.

Furthermore, independent method claims 7 and 19 recite method steps corresponding to the functions set forth above relative to the communication unit. Thus, method claims 7 and 19 are also distinguishable from the disclosure of Anderson *et al.* '122 on that basis.

Independent system claims 1 and 13 further recite the agent server as including a control unit connected to the communication unit and to the database or storing means for receiving from the user unique identification information for a network unit selected by the user. Anderson *et al.* '122 does not disclose or suggest a control unit for performing this function.

Independent method claims 7 and 19 recite method steps corresponding to the latter function of the control unit (*see* step (d) of each claim), and thus the method recited in claims 7 and 19 is further distinguishable from the disclosure of Anderson *et al.* '122 on that basis.

As recited in independent system claims 1 and 13, the control unit searches the database or storing means for a variable IP address of the network unit selected by the user on the basis of the unique identification information received from the user, and then responds to the results produced by the search for enabling the user to gain access to the selected network unit. In contrast, Anderson *et al.* '122 does not disclose a control unit

as recited in independent claims 1 and 13, much less a control unit for performing the function recited in the claims and just discussed above.

Independent method claims 7 and 19 recite steps corresponding to the latter function of the control unit (*see* steps (d) and (e) of each method claim), and thus the invention recited in claims 7 and 19 is further distinguishable from Anderson *et al.* '122 on that basis.


To summarize, independent system claims 1 and 13 recite an agent server having a communication unit, a database and a control unit with the functions recited in the claims. In contrast, Anderson *et al.* '122 does not disclose the details of an agent server, and thus does not disclose a communication unit or a control unit having the functions recited in the claims.

Finally, independent method claims 7 and 19 recite steps corresponding to the functions of the communication unit and the control unit recited in system claims 1 and 13, and thus independent claims 7 and 19 are distinguishable from the disclosure of Anderson *et al.* '122 on a similar basis.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the claims of this application are in condition for allowance, and early issuance thereof is solicited. Should any questions remain unresolved, the Examiner is requested to telephone Applicant's attorney.

No fee is incurred by this Amendment.

Respectfully submitted,



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